expected that these efforts will accelerate the pace of implementation of provisions of Part IX, read with Article 243ZD of the Constitution, and thus bring about greater conformity, in both letter and spirit, in all States and UTs includng Orissa to the Constitutional provisions of Panchayati Raj.

(c) No, Sir.

(d) Does not arise.

Caste panchayats in rural areas

891. SHRI SHAHID SIDDIQUI: Will the Minister of PANCHAYATI RAJ be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that many caste panchayats are functioning in the rural areas in the country;

(b) what steps Government have taken to make these illegal panchayats non-functioning and powerless; and

(c) whether any member of elected panchayats are active in these caste panchayats and if so, what action is being taken against them?

THE MINISTER OF PANCHAYATI RAJ (SHRI MANI SHANKAR AIYAR): (a) to (c) Ministry of Panchayati Raj is responsible for the work of advocacy and monitoring of the implementation of the Constitution (73rd Amendment) Act, 1992 in letter and spirit in the different States and UTs.

As defined in Part IX of the Constitution "Panchayat" means an institution by whatever name called of self-Government constituted under article 243 B for the rural areas. Article 243B States that there shall be constituted in every State, Panchayats at village, intermediate and district levels in accordance with the provisions of Part IX, with the exception that in a State having a population not exceeding twenty lakhs, Panchyats at the intermediate level may not be constituted.

The functioning of caste panchayats does not fall under the purview of the Ministry of Panchayati Raj. It is for the State Governments to take action in the matter.